This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A computer-readable medium having a tangible component, the computer-readable medium having stored thereon a data structure, the data structure separating storage of an attribute value from handling of the attribute value, the data structure comprising:

a) a model element class for implementing the constructs described by meta-data; the model element class storing an attribute value;

b) a meta-attribute information object for describing attributes of the model element class; ~~and~~

c) a model element field handler object for accessing the attribute value stored in the model element class; and

wherein the storage of the attribute value is separate from handling of the attribute value.

2. (Original) The computer-readable medium of claim 1, wherein the attribute value is stored in a private member field of the model element class.

3. (Original) The computer-readable medium of claim 1, wherein the model element field handler object comprises a singleton pattern.

4. (Original) The computer-readable medium of claim 1, wherein the model element field handler object sets the attribute value sorted in the model element class.

5. (Original) The computer-readable medium of claim 1, wherein the model element field handler comprises a typed model element field handler subclass.

6. (Original) The computer-readable medium of claim 5, wherein the typed model element field handler subclass defines a get value function for accessing the attribute value.

7. (Original) The computer-readable medium of claim 5, wherein the typed model element field hanger subclass defines a set value function for setting the attribute value.

8. (Original) The computer-readable medium of claim 1, wherein the data structure further comprises

d) a meta-class information object for storing data associated with the model element.

9. (Currently Amended) A computer-readable medium having a tangible component, the computer-readable medium having stored thereon a data structure, the data structure separating storage of an attribute value from handling of the attribute value, the data structure comprising:

a) a container for storing meta-data in a tree structure;

b) a model element class for implementing the constructs described by meta-data; the model element class storing an attribute value;

c) a meta-class information object for storing data associated with the model element;

d) a meta-attribute information object for describing attributes of the model element class; ~~and~~

e) a model element field handler object for accessing the attribute value stored in the model element class; and

wherein the storage of the attribute value is separate from handling of the attribute value.

10. (Currently Amended) The computer-readable medium of claim 9, wherein the container comprises a store acting as ~~the~~ a root of the tree structure.

11. (Original) The computer-readable medium of claim 9, wherein the model element field handler object comprises a singleton pattern.

12. (Original) The computer-readable medium of claim 9, wherein the model element field handler object sets the attribute value stored in the model element class.

13. (Original) The computer-readable medium of claim 9, wherein the model element field handler comprises a typed model element field handler subclass.

14. (Currently Amended) The computer-readable medium of claim ~~12~~ 13, wherein the typed model element field handler subclass defines a get value function for accessing the attribute value.

15. (Currently Amended) The computer-readable medium of claim ~~12~~ 13, wherein the typed model element field hanger subclass defines a set value function for setting the attribute value.

16. (Currently Amended) A method implemented at least in part by a computing device, the computing device ~~of~~ accessing an attribute value within a data structure, the data structure separating storage of the attribute value from handling of the attribute value, the method comprising:

a) storing the attribute value in a private member field of a model element class;

b) declaring a nested handler class, the nested handler class being a subclass of a generic handler class;

c) issuing a get value function to obtain the attribute value from the model element class; ~~and~~

d) receiving the attribute value from the model element class; and

wherein the storage of the attribute value is separate from handling of the attribute value.

17. (Original) The method of claim 16, wherein the nested handler class inherits base functionality from the generic handler class.

18. (Currently Amended) A method implemented at least in part by a computing device, the computing device ~~of~~ setting an attribute value within a data structure, the data structure separating storage of the attribute value from handling of the attribute value, the method comprising:

a) declaring a nested handler class, the nested handler class being a subclass of a generic handler class;

b) issuing a set value function to set the attribute value for the model element class;

c) setting the attribute value; ~~and~~

d) storing the attribute value in the model element class; and

wherein the storage of the attribute value is separate from handling of the attribute value.

19. (Original) The method of claim 18, wherein the nested handler class inherits base functionality from the generic handler class.